

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

Claims 1 - 6. - (Cancelled)

Claim 7. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer composition according to Claim 10, wherein a decrease in average molecular weight of said composition subsequent to subjecting said composition to at least one of said molding and radiation sterilization is not greater than 30 % of an average molecular weight of said composition prior to said at least one of said molding and said radiation sterilization.

Claim 8. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer composition according to Claim 10, wherein a drop in average molecular weight of said composition subsequent to subjecting said composition to said molding and radiation sterilization is not greater than 30% of an average molecular weight of said composition prior to said molding and said radiation sterilization.

Claim 9. - (Cancelled)

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

Claim 10. (Currently amended) A biodegradable polymer composition for molding by a method involving a melt of the composition, said composition comprising:

a biodegradable polymer that is at least one selected from the group consisting of: polyglycolic acid, polylactic acid, polydioxanan, ~~polyamino acid~~, polycaprolactone, copolymer of lactic acid and glycolic acid, copolymer of lactic acid and caprolactone, copolymer of glycolic acid and caprolactone, and polyhydroxybutyrate; and

a free radical scavenger that is at least one selected from the group consisting of: polyphenols, tannic acids, gallic acids, vitamin E, and triarylisocyanulate.

Claims 11, - 14. - (Cancelled)

Claim 15. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer composition according to Claim 10, wherein said free radical scavenger is present in an amount from 0.01 to 10 wt. % by volume per 100 wt. % of polymer.

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

Claim 16. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer composition according to Claim 10, wherein said free radical scavenger is present in an amount from 0.01 to 2 wt. % by volume per 100 wt. % of polymer.

Claim 17. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer composition according to Claim 10, wherein said biodegradable polymer composition is formed as a complex with an inorganic compound.

Claim 18. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer composition according to Claim 17, wherein said inorganic compound is selected from the group consisting of: apatite, zeolite, and titanium oxide.

Claims 19. - 22. - (Cancelled)

Claim 23. (Currently amended) A method for producing a biodegradable polymer product comprising mixing a biodegradable polymer and a free radical scavenger to form a mixture and molding said mixture by a method involving a melt of the mixture,

wherein said biodegradable polymer is at least one selected from the group consisting of: polyglycolic acid, polylactic acid, polydioxanan, polyamino-acid,

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

polycaprolactone, copolymer of lactic acid and glycolic acid, copolymer of lactic acid and caprolactone, copolymer of glycolic acid and caprolactone, and polyhydroxybutylate; and

said free radical scavenger is at least one selected from the group consisting of: polyphenols, tannic acids, gallic acids, vitamin E, and triarylisocyanulate.

Claims 24. - 27. - (Cancelled)

Claim 28. (Previously Presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said free radical scavenger is present in an amount from 0.01 to 10 wt. % by volume per 100 wt. % of polymer.

Claim 29. (Previously Presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said free radical scavenger is present in an amount from 0.01 to 2 wt. % by volume per 100 wt. % of polymer.

Claim 30. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said biodegradable polymer composition is formed as a complex with an inorganic compound.

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

Claim 31. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 30, wherein said inorganic compound is selected from the group consisting of: apatite, zeolite, and titanium oxide.

Claim 32. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said mixture is molded at a temperature not more than 50 degrees Centigrade higher than a melting temperature of said biodegradable polymer.

Claim 33. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said mixture is sterilized with radioactive rays with an intensity of 1.0 to 3.0 Mrad.

Claim 34. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, further comprising sterilizing said product with radioactive rays with an intensity of 1.0 to 3.0 Mrad.

Claim 35. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein an average molecular weight of said polymer is about 280,000 to 340,000.

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

Claim 36. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said molding said mixture by a method involving a melt of the mixture is a method selected from the group consisting of: extrusion molding, injection molding, and press molding.

Claim 37. (Previously presented) The method for producing a biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 23, wherein said product is a surgical suture.

Claim 38. (Currently amended) A biodegradable polymer product produced by molding a melt of a mixture comprising a biodegradable polymer and a free radical scavenger,

wherein said biodegradable polymer is at least one selected from the group consisting of: polyglycolic acid, polylactic acid, polydioxanan, ~~polyamino acid~~, polycaprolactone, copolymer of lactic acid and glycolic acid, copolymer of lactic acid and caprolactone, copolymer of glycolic acid and caprolactone, and polyhydroxybutylate; and

said free radical scavenger is at least one selected from the group consisting of: polyphenols, tannic acids, gallic acids, vitamin E, and triarylisocyanulate.

Docket No. F-7296

Ser. No. 10/060,588

Claim 39. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 38, wherein said free radical scavenger is present in an amount from 0.01 to 10 wt% per 100 wt% of said polymer.

Claim 40. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 38, wherein an average molecular weight of said polymer is 260,000 to 330,000.

Claim 41. (Previously presented) The biodegradable polymer product according to Claim 38 which is a surgical suture.